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Students Get Their Hands Wet on UNH's Coastal Floating Lab

By [Kathleen Schmitt](#)

N.H. Sea Grant
603-749-1565

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EDITORS/NEWS DIRECTORS:

Members of the media are invited to join any session (see schedule below). Contact Sharon Meeker or Barbara Pinto-Maurer at 603-749-1565 for more information. Eastman's Pier is located adjacent to River Street, off Route 1-A, south of Hampton Harbor Bridge in Seabrook, N.H.

DURHAM, N.H. -- Area middle school and high school students will get their hands wet this spring learning about marine and estuarine environments. They will participate in the 24th year of the Coastal Floating Lab, a marine education program sponsored by New Hampshire Sea Grant and the University of New Hampshire Cooperative Extension.

Time slots are still open and interested teachers should contact Sharon Meeker or Barbara Pinto-Maurer at 603-749-1565. The program is New Hampshire educational frameworks-based and includes an accompanying curriculum for participating teachers.

Students and teachers will experience a half-day adventure aboard the Lady Merrilee Ann, a 70-foot boat from Eastman's Fishing Fleet operating out of Seabrook. They will be accompanied by upper-level UNH students and several marine docents, a group of trained volunteers dedicated to the preservation and wise use of marine resources.

The boat is outfitted with simple oceanographic sampling equipment. While onboard, students will conduct research including water sampling and testing for dissolved oxygen, temperature, acidity and salinity. They will obtain and identify plankton, sample benthic communities, and use a sechi disk to test water clarity.

They will also record the speed and direction of currents, catch fish and invertebrates and learn basic coastal navigation techniques.

Students and their teachers will average their collected data back in the classroom and report their results to N.H. Sea Grant. This data will be compiled and become a part of the Coastal Floating Lab's database.

"New Hampshire's coast, its marshes, estuaries, beaches, rocky shoreline and open ocean is an important resource to the state. However, population growth, increasing demands on local resources, and probable impacts of offshore oil development place the future of the coast in jeopardy." says Sharon Meeker, UNH marine extension specialist. "Crucial decisions will be made in the next few decades by the students who are in school today. The goal of the Coastal Floating Lab is to increase students' knowledge and appreciation of coastal resources to help ensure that those decisions will be enlightened ones."

New Hampshire Sea Grant is a statewide program based at UNH that supports university research and outreach dedicated to the stewardship and sustainable use of the coastal environment. It is one of 31 such state-federal partnerships that make up the NOAA National Sea Grant College Program.

Coastal Floating Lab Participants and Dates:

Derry

Calvary Christian High School

Teacher: Laurie Fleming

Thursday, May 23

12:30 to 3:30

Hood Middle School -- 8th grade

Teacher: Rich Cushman

Thursday, May 23

8:30 to 1:30

Tuesday, May 28

8:30 to 11:30 and 12:30 to 3:30

Durham

Oyster River High School (*on Great Bay in the UNH Gulf Challenger)

Teacher: Kara Douglas
April 30 or May 1
9:00 to 12:00

Farmington

Henry Wilson Memorial School -- 8th grade
Teacher: Charlie Silfvenius
Thursday, May 30
8:30 to 11:30

Hampton Falls

Lincoln Akerman School -- 7th & 8th
Teacher: Richard Sanborn
Friday, May 31
8:30 to 11:30 and 12:30 to 3:30

Lebanon

Hanover Street School -- 6th grade
Teacher: Judy Filkins
Tuesday, May 21
8:30 to 11:30 and 12:30 to 3:30
Friday, May 24
8:30 to 11:30 and 12:30 to 3:30

Northwood

Coe-Brown Academy (HS)
Teacher: Wini Young
Monday, May 20
8:30 to 11:30

Plaistow

Timberlane Middle School -- 8th grade
Teacher: Deb Bamforth
Wednesday, May 29
12:30 to 3:30

Portsmouth

Portsmouth Middle School -- 8th grade
Teacher: Ruth Larkin
May 15 or 16
9:00 to 12:30

Somersworth

Somersworth Middle School -- 5th grade
Teacher: Leslie McRobie
Friday, May 17
12:00 to 3:00

Thetford, Vermont
Thetford Academy (HS)
Teacher: Ted Mellifera
12:30 to 3:30

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